

**288—13.6(17A) Presiding officer.**

**13.6(1)** Any party who wishes to request that the presiding officer assigned to render a proposed decision be an administrative law judge employed by the department of inspections and appeals must file a written request within 20 days after service of a notice of hearing which identifies or describes the presiding officer as the agency head or members of the agency.

**13.6(2)** The agency or its designee may deny the request only upon a finding that one or more of the following apply:

*a.* Neither the agency nor any officer of the agency under whose authority the contested case is to take place is a named party to the proceeding or a real party in interest to that proceeding.

*b.* There is a compelling need to expedite issuance of a final decision in order to protect the public health, safety, or welfare.

*c.* An administrative law judge is unavailable to hear the case within a reasonable time.

*d.* The case involves significant policy issues of first impression that are inextricably intertwined with the factual issues presented.

*e.* The demeanor of the witnesses is likely to be dispositive in resolving the disputed factual issues.

*f.* Funds are unavailable to pay the costs of an administrative law judge and an interagency appeal.

*g.* The request was not timely filed.

*h.* The request is not consistent with a specified statute.

**13.6(3)** The agency or its designee shall issue a written ruling specifying the grounds for its decision within 20 days or such other time period the agency designates after a request for an administrative law judge is filed. The parties shall be notified at least 10 days prior to hearing if a qualified administrative law judge will not be available.

**13.6(4)** Except as provided otherwise by another provision of law, all rulings by an administrative law judge acting as presiding officer are subject to appeal to the agency. A party must seek any available intra-agency appeal in order to exhaust adequate administrative remedies.

**13.6(5)** Unless otherwise provided by law, agency heads and members of multimembered agency heads, when reviewing a proposed decision upon intra-agency appeal, shall have the powers of and shall comply with the provisions of this chapter which apply to presiding officers.